

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 COME-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00

SP-02 PM-04 MC-02 L-03 AID-05 IGA-02 /040 W

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R 060954Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7923

INFO JCS WASHDC

COMUSMACTHAI TH

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 2621

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, MASS, TH

SUBJ: COLT'S ROB ROY VISITS THAILAND

1. COLT'S INTERNATIONAL SALES MANAGER, ROB ROY, MADE A PERIODICAL SWING THROUGH BANGKOK EARLIER THIS WEEK. COLT'S BANGKOK AGENT ARRANGED AN APPOINTMENT FOR ROY WITH FM CHATCHAI ON FEBRUARY 4. CHATCHAI, IN TURN, ARRANGED FOR ROY TO CALL ON MOD PRAMAN THE FOLLOWING DAY.

2. EMBASSY OFFICER TALKED WITH ROY PRIOR TO THE ABOVE MEETINGS AND ROY GAVE A REPORT OF MEETINGS TO POMIL COUNSELOR PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE FOR KUALA LUMPUR. CHATCHAI INDICATED INTEREST IN HAVING AN ARMS PLANT ESTABLISHED IN THAILAND, BUT THE ISSUE WAS DISCUSSED ONLY IN BROAD TERMS. ROY WAS LED TO EXPECT MORE DEFINITIVE DISCUSSIONS WITH PRAMAN; HOWEVER, QE INDICATED PRAMAN WAS EITHER UNINFORMED AS TO ANY ARMS PLANT PROJECT, OR PREOCCUPIED WITH DOMESTIC POLITICAL MANEUVERS. CONSEQUENTLY, NO SOLID GROUND WAS COVERED IN EITHER MEETING.

3. IF COLT HAD ITS WAY, IT WOULD PREFER DIRECT MILITARY SALES. IF THE THAI WANT AND INSIST ON AN ARMS PLANT, COLT WOULD GO ALONG. ROY TOLD US THAT THE THAI GAVE NO INDICATION OF HOW THEY  
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WOULD DEAL WITH THE HK-33 PLANT IF THEY WENT FOR M-16 PRO-

DUCTION. HOWEVER, COLT WOULD PUSH FOR A MULTI SMALL ARMS PRODUCTION CAPABILITY TO INCLUDE 5.56 AND 50 CAL. MACHINE GUNS AS WELL AS M-16'S. THIS MIGHT BE A WAY OF CAMOUFLAGING THE IMPLICIT ADMISSION THAT THE HK-33 PLANT WAS A FLOP. HE WAS CATEGORICAL THAT COLT WOULD NOT VENTURE ANY OF ITS CAPITAL IN A JOINT VENTURE.

4. ANOTHER FACET OF THE EQUATION IS COST EFFECTIVENESS. ROY INDICATES 150,000 RIFLES AS THE BREAK-EVEN POINT FOR A THAI M-16 PLANT. ACCORDING TO THE MISSION'S UNOFFICIAL COUNT, THE RTG HAS OVER 150,000 M-16'S IN ITS CURRENT INVENTORY. THUS, THE RTG WOULD NOT APPEAR ABLE TO ABSORB ANOTHER 150,000 RIFLES. THE RTG MIGHT BE THINKING OF MANAGING THIS PROBLEM THROUGH EXPORTS, ALTHOUGH COLT IS NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THAT IDEA. WHITEHOUSE

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## Message Attributes

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